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THE WORKS OF THE AMERICAN ETCHERS.

IX.—ALBERT F. BELLOWS.



R. BELLOWS—born at Milford, Mass., in the year 1830—thus describes his experiences as an etcher, in a letter to the writer of these lines:—
“My first plate, or attempt, was made when I was a boy of nine years, at school, on the back of an old card-plate with a coating of beeswax and pure nitric acid from the apothecary's. The result was more vigorous than artistic. This, with one or two efforts made years ago, is all I have done until within the last three years. . . . I only mention this to show that the *desire* to etch is no new thing with me, though other branches of art have been so absorbing that I have done little until recently. But now I am fairly in it, and hope to do more and better in future.”

Following is a list of the plates which the artist himself considers the best he has yet done. The sizes given are those of the etched surface, and all the plates are signed in full.

Windsor Castle from the Thames. Etched in 1878.—Breadth $4\frac{1}{8}$ " ; height $5\frac{3}{8}$ ".

Old Trees at Hartford. 1878.—B. 3" ; h. $4\frac{3}{8}$ ".

Old Mill at Oyster Bay. 1878.—B. $5\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $3\frac{3}{4}$ ".

Mill Pond at Windsor, Conn. 1878.—B. $5\frac{3}{4}$ " ; h. $3\frac{1}{4}$ ". Published herewith.

Skaneateles Lake, N. Y. 1879.—B. $5\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. 4".

Old Mill at New London. 1879.—B. $5\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $7\frac{3}{8}$ ". Plate owned by Messrs. H. Wunderlich & Co.

The Dark Entry, Canterbury Cathedral. 1879.—B. $7\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $10\frac{3}{8}$ ".

Old Elms at Hartford, Conn. 1880.—B. $7\frac{1}{8}$ " ; h. $4\frac{3}{4}$ ".

The plates executed by Mr. Bellows are a potent argument in favor of etching as a painter's art. Few American painters have equalled Mr. Bellows in popularity, and a great many of his works have therefore been reproduced. But—although I should be loth to be numbered among those who would speak slightly of the noble art of the engraver—it must be said that in none of these reproductions are the individual traits of the artist, his excellences as well as his short-comings, so fully expressed as in his own etchings. The tenderness and delicacy of his best water-color drawings, verging sometimes on lack of strength, are there,—his peculiarities of handling in foliage, tree-trunks, ground, and sky. In the process of transmutation which the original undergoes as it passes through the engraver's brain and hand, something of these characteristics must necessarily be lost, and something, however slight, of the reproductive artist's individuality must be added; and thus, while the outward semblance of the original may apparently be strictly adhered to, its finer peculiarities—its flavor, so to speak—are apt to be lost.

The plate published with this number of the REVIEW is rather a slight, although a characteristic, specimen of the artist's performances. But the end of days is not yet, and the readers of the REVIEW may therefore hope to see some of the more important etched work of Mr. Bellows, of which the *Old Mill at New London* and the *Old Elms at Hartford* are excellent examples.

S. R. KOEHLER.